

## VISIONING APPROACH

Over 55 Cluster stakeholders attended two visioning workshops to help define goals for the Cluster 10 reinvestment strategy. These workshops began with a presentation by the Technical Assistance Team to provide all participants with an overview of the Asset Profile, including a summary of the results of Focus Groups and Instrumented Group Interviews (conducted during the Data Gathering phase). Then stakeholders worked with Cluster Board and Technical Assistance Team members (acting as facilitators and recorders) to respond to a prepared Visioning Discussion Agenda in a 50-minute break out group covering one of six planning topics:

### Workshop One

- Neighborhood Commercial
- Housing
- Youth Development

### Workshop Two

- Job Centers
- Transportation
- Environment

Participants in each breakout group had the opportunity to present their own vision statements as well as to respond to the prepared discussion agenda; all ideas were recorded on maps and flip chart sheets.

Each of the breakout groups summarized its findings for all Visioning participants. As the results of each group were reported, stakeholders from other breakout groups had an opportunity to ask questions and to have their vision ideas for that topic recorded on flip chart sheets. Then each participant voted for the ideas/visions under each topic heading which he or she felt were most important to the future of the Cluster.

## Visioning Results

The visioning results are summarized below by planning topic.

### Neighborhood Commercial

Stakeholders reviewed the neighborhood commercial reinvestment target areas identified earlier by Focus Group participants with reference to the results of the neighborhood commercial building condition survey. Stakeholders concluded that new commercial developments of a scale appropriate to serve groups of neighborhoods

and the Cluster overall were appropriate, but that very large commercial centers (of a scale to serve the City or the region and containing more than 150,000 square feet on a site of 15 or more acres) were not compatible with the goal of maintaining the residential character and stability of the Cluster.

The reinvestment target areas identified in the Asset Profile were reviewed and confirmed. However, stakeholders clarified that commercial reinvestment on Livernois north and south of 7 Mile should reinforce, rather than replace, the existing, “main street” pattern and pedestrian orientation of the successful Avenue of Fashion commercial area. A majority of the stakeholders endorsed the goal of mixing commercial and residential uses in neighborhood commercial reinvestment areas and including community gathering spaces (plaza, green space) used for events which might include “market days” for small, retail entrepreneurs (e.g., cart vendors), as in Cluster 5’s Mexicantown Mercado.

Stakeholders also pointed out that the 7 Mile/Meyers intersection should be shown as a cluster-scale commercial development since a project of over 150,000 square feet is already planned at this location. Livernois at Fenkell was endorsed as the best location for another, cluster-scale commercial center; stakeholders noted that coordination with Cluster 9 strategies for the future of the area west of Livernois would be essential in future planning.

Stakeholders also felt that reinvestment strategies were needed to address the 8 Mile, Greenfield/Lodge area, although future uses other than retail/commercial might be considered at this location.

Stakeholders recognized that not all of the commercial strips in the Cluster would recover as viable commercial areas. In discussing potential re-use strategies for these areas, stakeholders suggested redevelopment as green spaces and/or multifamily housing (townhouses, garden apartments). In areas where existing successful commercial development (or reinvestment target areas) need additional off-street parking capacity or), strip segments could also be redeveloped as attractively landscaped off-street parking.

## Housing

Stakeholders felt that the most important housing reinvestment goal in Cluster 10 was to maintain the stability of neighborhoods where housing is in good condition by continuing to strengthen resident participation in neighborhood organizations/activities and by providing for more and better code enforcement. Stakeholders are willing and able to work in partnership with the City to enhance code enforcement effectiveness (by identifying and reporting code violations and monitoring compliance progress), but want to be sure the City has the ability to inspect reported violations and enforce compliance with existing ordinances.

Stakeholders also supported the idea of targeting housing reinvestment resources to reinforce the success of ongoing housing rehab and infill efforts. Stakeholders stressed that rehab and infill housing development efforts should go hand in hand. Stakeholders also proposed that the City facilitate the sale of those vacant lots which are too small for infill housing development to adjacent property owners and participate in the State's Project SAVED program to speed the transfer of tax reverted properties to qualified non-profits for rehab and resale. A more cooperative attitude (partnership) between building inspectors and those who are improving the city's housing stock is also needed to facilitate reinvestment by streamlining inspections and approvals.

Stakeholders also felt strongly that City resources should be more equitably distributed between efforts to improve older areas and efforts to attract new development/redevelopment projects. Visioning participants also stressed the need to identify citywide priorities and initiatives and to look across Cluster and municipal boundaries in planning effectively.

## Youth Development

Because outreach on available programs seems to be less effective than it should be, stakeholders suggested establishing a Youth Information Hotline to disseminate information about a broad range of youth educational, recreational, job training and counseling programs. A multipurpose center, providing a variety of services for youth and their families (for example, recreation, daycare, parenting programs, counseling), was also proposed.

Stakeholders were also especially interested in seeking funding support for extending public schools' open hours and providing a variety of programs to supplement the base public schools' curriculum. A community schools model – where public schools serve as a focus of community activity before and after school hours – was enthusiastically supported.

To expand recreational opportunities and provide a better geographic distribution of parks and playgrounds, stakeholders suggested greater cooperation between the City Recreation Department and the public schools, as well as partnerships with institutions of higher learning, to increase the availability of youth activity sites and programs.

### **Job Centers**

Although stakeholders would like to promote the creation of higher wage manufacturing, technology and skilled trades in the Cluster, they realize that the amount of land which is appropriately located and zoned for these uses is limited to the area north of Oakman Boulevard. Nevertheless, stakeholders strongly endorsed the idea of expanding job training and entrepreneurial development opportunities within the Cluster by working in partnership with Focus Hope, the University of Detroit Mercy and other educational institutions and developing a skilled construction trades center to train residents in housing repair, rehab and construction. Stakeholders also supported the idea of establishing a cluster-based business development organization to give residents a strong voice in planning and decision-making and to serve as a liaison with the City.

### **Transportation**

Stakeholders proposed a number of low cost improvements, including better lighting and access to emergency phones, which they felt would make public transit safer and more appealing to users. Public transit was considered to be an important priority in the Cluster and stakeholders believed significant efforts should be made to improve regional service (to the suburbs and to downtown) on major streets (e.g., Woodward). In addition, enhanced service on routes which link major educational, shopping and employment destinations within the Cluster was suggested.

On the topic of road conditions, stakeholders felt that street paving and repair standards should be improved to increase durability. In addition, the use of "traffic calming" techniques to discourage through traffic and slow travel speeds on residential streets was suggested.

To reduce auto insurance rates, stakeholders believed police should devote greater resources to investigating and persecuting vehicle thefts and enforcing existing traffic laws. In addition, the City of Detroit should be represented on the state insurance commission.

## **Environment**

Stakeholders felt that the issues of dumping, junked cars, and unmaintained vacant lots had a significant impact on Cluster 10's quality of life. They strongly endorsed the idea of dedicating greater resources to the enforcement of existing laws and ordinances. Moreover, they felt that better education of residents, and enforcement of regulations on trash collection, would not only improve the area's appearance, but also discourage illegal dumping. In addition, they proposed the transfer of city-owned parcels to community-based non-profit organizations who could take responsibility for their maintenance.

Stakeholders also suggested improved street lighting, better sign control in commercial areas and neighborhood entry signs.

## **Vision Statements**

Cluster 10 Board members and stakeholders also offered the following statements describing their visions for the future of Cluster 10.

A diverse, non-exclusive residential community that offers housing choices for all life styles and stages; provides all retail goods and services need by residents; and offers job training and a wide variety of well paid jobs.

A community brimming with vitality and in which both residents and businesses are integral, contributing partners.

A green, clean and safe community where all basic services are available, streets are designed for people and traffic is controlled.

A community that plans and works together to achieve its vision.